

INTELLIFAX 12

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COUNTRY	Soviet Zone of Germany	25X1	REPORT NO.		25X1
TOPIC	Mine Disaster in the JOHANNESBURG Stadt Uranium District				

EVALUATION	25X1	PLACE OBTAINED	25X1
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DATE OF CONTENT: End of November 1949

DATE OBTAINED _____ 25X1 DATE PREPARED 3 February 1950

REFERENCES

PAGES 1 ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE) 1

REMARKS:

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1. Press reports on this disaster are much exaggerated. There were about 300 victims. This figure may be increased by those who died in hospital; however, this cannot be proved, as all German doctors were replaced by Russian doctors to prevent any leakage of information on the effects of the catastrophe.
 2. It is certain that the accident originated in the winding engine shop of shaft No 31. (There is no shaft No 35.) Excessive overload caused the cable to catch fire, which immediately spread to the dried planking. The smoke was sucked into the mine by the natural air flow, as well as by the ventilators, which only later were switched off. Thus, all levels of Object No 1 were affected. Work could not be resumed for more than a week.
 3. Many German employees were arrested immediately, the Russians being convinced that there had been sabotage. Some of the Germans are still being held. Annoying and awkward interrogations by the KVD have not yet ended.
 4. Press reports on this accident are mainly based on reports of the "Berliner Telegraf", which were copied by the other newspapers.

25X1 Comment :

First information on the mine disaster in JOHANNESBURG at the end of November 1949.

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